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Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum
Fundit humus flores. — VIRG. Ec. 9.

——— Winter gray
Horrid with frost, & turbulent with storm
Now melts into the Spring; soft Spring, with breath
Favonian. YOUNG.

THE season of SPRING has ever been a delightful theme of the poet. It has been celebrated with all the beauty of verse, and all the powers of imagination. It has called forth the exertions of many a 'mighty master' of the lyre; and has generally among that finely feeling race had the preference over the other seasons. We shall not pretend

to assign the causes of this preference. Perhaps there is something in the awakening charms of nature, a harmony in her voice, a beauty in her smile, at this season, which thus delight the heart. Perhaps it is the return of genial skies, and verdant prospects, to compensate for the dreariness and desolation of Winter, which thus thrills upon the soul; like the western breeze, when the storm of heaven is past, breathing upon the simple harp of Aeolus, and eliciting its sweet & involuntary music.

We have already had occasion in the course of our labors to dwell upon the more melancholy seasons of the year; and if Spring, in all her blooming attire, could draw forth from us any thing more than the common-place repetition of her beauties, we should rest amply satisfied. Infinitely varied and lovely as she is, so much has been already said, that it is almost precludes the possibility of presenting any new or interesting ideas. The pencil of the painter, the pen of the poet, have been so long employed in setting forth the pleasures and the emotions produced by Spring, that it seems a work of supererog-

ation to attempt to praise her more. But, on the other hand, cold indeed must be the heart, and lifeless the tongue, which would refuse to join in the universal song of nature, when all around is beauty, and verdure, & delight. If we cannot add to the descriptions of Spring already produced; if we cannot throw more feeling and more rapture into the thousand songs that hail her approach; let us at least acquiesce in their melodies, and soaring "from nature up to nature's God," read in the face of Spring its Author and its Restorer.

The first emotion which a contemplation of the beauties of Spring ought to produce in the heart, is that of gratitude. Were winter, with his icy chains forever to encircle the earth, how sad and how dreary would be the prospect. But Spring comes to enliven and to cheer the desolation of nature; to pour the sunshine of joy over the barren plain, and the snow-clad hills; to bid our hearts rise up in willing homage to Him, to whom we owe it all. We must be lost to the commonest dictates of conscience, if we can refrain from feeling

somewhat of such an emotion. When we walk forth into the fields; behold the various tribes of the air resuming their wonted haunts; the rivulet again meandering in its accustomed course; the whole prospect once more clad with smiling green; every thing around us claims our admiration, and calls for our grateful acknowledgements to heaven.

There is a sweetness in the calm and beautiful repose of natural scenery at this season of the year which comes home to the heart. When there is no storm to disturb the air, no winds to howl along their course, Spring presents undoubtedly the most delightful prospects. Still as the hottest noon of summer, but cool and refreshing, the scarcely breathing air seems fraught with a thousand charms. The melody of the birds, the murmuring of the brook, the cheerful voice of the distant ploughman, speak a language to the ear, which is the music of nature. Our feelings partake of the renovation of life which we behold around us; the gloomy mind, the overcast brow, have no business in such scenes. The furrows of care, the tortures of anxiety, must now relapse into a smile.

the least enthusiastic is compelled to participate in the joy which even the brutes evince.

To the mind of contemplation there is also abundant scope. If Autumn reminds us of the hour of our departure, Spring breathes with the memento of immortality. If Autumn warns us by its yellow leaf, and melancholy scenery, Spring, starting into life, tells us of a change, where the storm shall never howl, and the prospect never fade. From the tomb of winter, nature rises more lovely and resplendent; — from the winter of the tomb the soul of man shall rise to an eternity of being. But let us not merely speculate. Let us not merely regard it as a matter of course. It may do for the often half infidel pencil of poesy to pourtray man rising clad in the smiles of immortal happiness, as an inevitable event; — but to the mind that regards the subject as it ought to be [redacted] viewed, a more serious consideration presents itself. When the Autumn and the winter of our days are past, shall the eternal Spring of heaven, or the hopeless winter of hell, burst upon our gaze? — is a question of no small

importance. When the delusions of this life are past away forever; when the magic coloring which passion, and prejudice, and selfishness throw on every thing we see, is dissipated by the realising touch of Death; we must remember that it is not these mere act of our volition, the mere exertion of such undefined wishes as we experience in life, that will ensure our happiness to eternity. No pictures of fancy, no thrill of poetic inspiration, can imagine the joys or the horrors of that awful hour; when the neglect of past opportunities, and the rejection of past mercies, cannot be repaired; when the soul, unless its eternal interest has been attended to in life, must sink forever, hopeless and undone. But with strange infatuation, we go out and linger on the contemplation of Nature, ravished with the charms of Spring, and basking in her ray, and if ever a thought of futurity darts across our minds, we take it for granted, that thus we too shall rise, thus lovely, thus restored; never dreaming that the grave has likewise horrors, where the voice of

hope, and of peace, and of love, and of mercy, are never heard. ~~[illegible]~~ We forget to prepare for death in such a manner, that we may look with joyful confidence beyond the tomb. Were the husbandman to destroy the seeds of Autumn, where would be the harvest of the coming year? Oh could we learn from the scene which we propose to admire, our proper course of duty; could we look forward to that great day of account, when all that pride, and vanity, and earthly hope,

——— Throw

Of magic round us, is extinct; —

and seek in our neglected bibles the path to everlasting enjoyment; — How might we look upon the season whose beauties we have been attempting to describe, with ~~[illegible]~~ infinitely more delight; and our hearts, attuned to heavenly meditation, and lifted from this grovelling scene of doubts and fears, would be enabled to kindle at the harmonies of nature, and dwell ~~with~~ delightful anticipation on the period when we shall be called to leave this life forever, and triumph in the completion of celestial bliss.

Let us then go and survey the beauties of nature with a vision thus purified, and a heart thus elevated. From the busy hum of the populous city let us turn to the abodes of contemplation and solitude. Let us see God in all around us, and feel his presence whensoever we move:—

——— Forth in the pleasing Spring
His beauty walks, his tenderness, & love.
Wide flush the fields; the op'ning air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense, & every heart is joy. (1)

It has been often remarked, that the usual descriptions of Spring do not correspond with the actual face of nature;— that the associations which we have always been accustomed to connect with this season exist only in imagination;— and that particularly on this side of the Atlantic, it is folly to compare for a moment the beautiful pictures which European poets have drawn, with our bleak and uninviting Springs. But all this has been exaggerated. The inhabitant of a city, who never sees any thing

(1) Thomson's Hymn.—

beyond its dusty streets, is certainly ill qualified to form any judgment of the matter; and most of those who actually live in the country, feel little relish for the charms of nature, immersed as they are in constant bodily activity, and laborious occupation. To a considerable degree, the observation is just, that the Spring of this country is not so beautiful as that of Europe; but even bleak & stormy as it is, it is beyond description. It has pleasures and prospects more than sufficient to counterbalance its deficiences. And even if it were in general an unpleasant and disagreable season, yet there is in our opinion a charm unavoidably spread over every object, which bespeaks the presence of a happier hour. Were there nothing more to delight us than the brightening verdure of the trees and fields, or the returning melody of the groves, it would be sufficient for the highest gratification. To our eyes, there is a lustre and splendency in the sunshine that awakes when the tempest is at rest, which is far

more pleasing than if it were generally an uniform glow of beauty, and light, and serenity. Perhaps our opinion may be attributed to a natural partiality for our own land; — but we should rather be inclined to attribute it to a common emotion of the heart, which is generally delighted to behold the darkness and the storm succeeded by the pure light of heaven; — as the sunshine of joy is far more lovely, when it rises above the gloom of grief and of sorrow, dissipating its blackness, and yielding brighter hours. And to the wounded bosom, that is suffering beneath the lash of anguish, or the mournful recollections of memory, the sad, yet beautiful appearance of Spring must come with peculiar force; bringing with its reviving hour a sweetness that soothes the darker remembrances of the past, and shedding over the whole a calmness of repose; like the fabled bird of old, whose form, recumbent on the heaving waters, lulled the ocean to repose,

when lashed to its loudest pow, or
its soft and feathery bosom floated
on the wave.

V.